

**DECISION**



19536  
Mortin  
**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

**FILE:** B-203387.2

**DATE:** September 21, 1982

**MATTER OF:** Southwest Aircraft Services

**DIGEST:**

GAO sees no reason why the Air Force should take nine months to implement recommendation made in connection with prior decision that awardee's option not be exercised and requirement resolicited and recommends that resolicitation be accomplished as quickly as possible.

Southwest Aircraft Services has objected to the Air Force's response to our recommendation made in connection with our decision, Southwest Aircraft Services, B-203387, June 16, 1982, 82-1 CPD 591, that the awardee's option not be exercised and that the requirement be resolicited for the next fiscal year.

The Air Force, by letter of July 13, expressed its intention to resolicit, but stated that because there was insufficient lead time to permit an award by October 1, the beginning of the next fiscal year, it had extended the incumbent's contract for six months. The letter pointed out that a new solicitation with revised specifications and a new statement of work had to be written, the requirement had to be published in the Commerce Business Daily and the bidders had to be given sufficient time to respond. In addition, the agency stated that time must be allowed for bid evaluations, responsibility determinations, for the Small Business Administration to complete its Certificate of Competency procedures if required, and for a transition period if a new contractor received the award.

Southwest argues that the Air Force could have made an award before October 1 because it has had many years of experience with similar contracts for the washing of aircraft. In response to the Air Force's statement that one of the major changes will involve adjustments in the specifications to accommodate the presence of new aircraft including the C-141 Stretch, Southwest points out that in the solicitation, dated December 16, 1980, which resulted in the incumbent's contract, there was a requirement for cleaning a C-141 Stretch.

We have discussed the matter with the Air Force and it agrees that the C-141 Stretch has been present at Norton Air Force Base for some time. Nevertheless, it anticipates that some minor changes will be made in the working specifications and that other new aircraft at the base will require additional modification of the specifications. It insists that the time normally consumed by such reviews and adjustments in the specifications justifies the extension of the incumbent's contract.

Although the Air Force already had sufficient specifications with respect to the C-141 Stretch, we recognize that preparing a new solicitation with the other requirement changes and obtaining all of the necessary internal reviews and approvals requires some time, as does the notice, evaluation and award process. Nevertheless, we see no reason whatever why the agency would require nine months to award a new contract for these services. Our decision was received in June, while the six-month contract extension will not begin until October 1. Consequently, we are recommending by letter of today that the resolicitation be accomplished as quickly as possible and that we be informed of the progress made.

*Harry R. Canine*  
for Comptroller General  
of the United States